

Here are some helpful guidelines to help get your planting underway.

A guide to planting trees at home

At the Woodland Trust, the UK's leading woodland conservation charity, we're passionate about trees and woods. This Tree Week, why not bring some of the beauty of the natural world to your garden by planting a native tree or shrub.

Why plant trees?

We need them! Trees are crucial to our survival – they help stabilise the soil and they generate oxygen. Trees and woods (especially native broadleaved trees and woods) provide food and shelter to hundreds of insects, birds, fungi and mammals. They also provide wood fuel and timber. Trees and woods are beautiful, special places. Often they provide much-loved landmarks.

Where's the best place to plant trees?

If you are a tenant or have a shared garden, always make sure you have the landowner's permission to plant a tree. If you have permission (or own your own garden) you need to plant an appropriate tree in an appropriate place.

What about planting trees in domestic gardens?

If you want to plant trees in your garden, consider the size the tree could eventually reach. Avoid planting large trees too close to buildings. In smaller gardens, consider planting shrubs or hedges instead of trees.

If you've got a large, spacious garden – you can choose bigger trees

A large garden might be suitable for species such as oak or hornbeam. Trees like these provide homes and food to an extraordinary range of insects and the birds which feed on them.

Not got a huge garden? Plant a smaller tree!

If your garden cannot accommodate larger trees, medium-sized trees are far less greedy for space and are just as important to wildlife. All of the following, with the exception of silver birch (which offers wonderful autumn colour), have the added bonus of beautiful blossom in spring:

Common whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), **wild cherry** (*Prunus avium*), **crab apple** (*Malus sylvestris*), and **silver birch** (*Betula pendula*).

Even smaller trees – and shrubs

These can also provide a home for an array of animals and insects. Willows and sallows support more plant-eating insects than any other native tree or shrub. Small trees are ideal for smaller spaces and they can provide a living boundary. Yew is ideal for a formal straight-edged hedge (the yew's leaves and seeds are poisonous, so care must be taken when planting to ensure that children and livestock are not at risk). Hawthorn and blackthorn provide dense, protective cover for garden birds to nest.

Hedges should be planted between November and March. If you want to encourage wildlife to your garden, a handy tip is to brush your natural garden waste into the lower part of the hedge rather than burning it. You might find you've provided a home for hedgehogs and other small mammals.

- **Some small native trees:** **holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*), **yew** (*Taxus baccata*), **hawthorn** (*Crataegus monogyna*), **hazel** (*Corylus avellana*)
- **Some native shrubs:** **blackthorn** (*Prunus spinosa*), **buckthorn** (*Rhamnus catharticus*), **alder buckthorn** (*Frangula alnus*), **guelder rose** (*Viburnum opulus*)

How do I plant and care for my trees and saplings?

Once you have your sapling, you should plant it as soon as possible. If you cannot plant it immediately, wrap the roots in plastic and keep the sapling out of drying wind and under shade to protect it from either freezing or overheating. Do not keep saplings out of the ground for more than seven days. Trees should be planted in moist, frost-free soil. The best time to plant trees is between November and March (however cell-grown trees can be planted from September through to May, unless it is exceptionally warm).

How to plant a tree in your garden

You should dig a hole that is large enough for you to cover the root plug with around 3 cm of soil. Then heel-in or firm the soil well around the roots. Mulch a metre wide circle around the base of the tree with composted bark, manure or grass clippings.

Native trees, gardens and wildlife

More threatened species (and species of conservation concern) depend on areas associated with broadleaf woodland than any other UK habitat. Native plants are the backbone of our wildlife's food chain. Native insects, birds and other animals find it hard to survive without the food and shelter they provide. As our urban and rural environments come under increasing pressure, the cultivation of native plants in gardens and public places becomes more and more important for conserving our precious wildlife.

What are our native trees and shrubs?

Native trees

Silver birch - *Betula pendula*; Downy birch - *Betula pubescens*;
Hornbeam - *Carpinus betula*;
Hazel - *Corylus avellana*; Common hawthorn - *Crataegus monogyna*;
Juniper - *Juniperus communis*; Crab apple - *Malus sylvestris*;
Scots pine - *Pinus sylvestris*;
Aspen - *Populus tremula*; Bird cherry - *Prunus padus*;
Wild cherry - *Prunus avium*; Sessile oak - *Quercus petraea*;
Pedunculate oak - *Quercus robur*;
Goat willow or sallow - *Salix caprea*;
Bay willow - *Salix pentandra*; Common whitebeam - *Sorbus aria*;
Rowan (mountain ash) - *Sorbus aucuparia*; Wild Service Tree - *Sorbus torminalis*; Yew - *Taxus baccata*;
Wych elm - *Ulmus glabra*.

Native shrubs

Blackthorn - *Prunus spinosa*; Dogwood - *Cornus sanguinea*;
Buckthorn - *Rhamnus catharticus*; Alder buckthorn - *Frangula alnus*;
Guelder rose - *Viburnum opulus*;
Spindle - *Euonymus europaea*; Osier - *Salix viminalis*;
Grey willow - *Salix cinerea*; Elder - *Sambucus nigra*.
Honeysuckle – *Lonicera periclymenum*; Broom – *Cytisus scoparius*

Common introduced trees

Sycamore - *Acer pseudoplatanus*; Sweet chestnut - *Castanea sativa*;
Horse chestnut - *Aesculus hippocastanum*; White poplar - *Populus alba*;
Many firs, spruces, larches, pines, cypresses etc.; London Plane; Beech – *Fagus sylvatica*; Lime – *Tilia x europaea*.